**Selection of SC/ST/OBCs on merit basis**

3008. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as provided under para 11 of Explanatory Notes to DOPT OM No. 36012/2/96-Estt. (Res.) dated 2nd July, 1997 persons belonging to SCs/STs and OBCs who are selected on merit are not required to be shown against the quota of vacancies/posts reserved for their communities; and

(b) if so, the total number of persons belonging to SCs, STs and OBCs who have been selected/recruited/promoted on merit to different categories of services and not counted against the 'reserved quota of vacancies/posts' for their communities during the last three years under his Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) For Group 'A' posts recruitment is made by Department of Personnel and Training. As regards the posts in Groups B, C & D, category-wise vacancies are intimated to Department of Personnel and Training. As per records, no such case has come to the notice of this Ministry.

**Exploration of CBM in Raniganj**

3009. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC had applied for grant of PEL for an area of 240 sq. km. in North Raniganj in Raniganj Coalfield on 23rd November, 98 for CBM exploration;

(b) whether four slim holes have been drilled so far; and

(c) how much time it would take to ascertain the course of furthering CBM exploration in the area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The CBM exploration in this block is dependent on the assessment of CBM potential and also on the results of the slim hole drilling for which no specific time limit can be fixed.

**Shareholdings in Mangalore Refinery**

3010. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of persons who are holding share capital above 25 per cent in Mangalore Refinery and Petro-chemicals;

(b) the quantum purchased by Aditya Birla Group in the said sharcholding; and

(c) whether there is any proposal to purchase the Aditya Birla Group's stake in the Mangalore Refinery and Petro-chemicals by the HPCL?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and A.V. Birla Group (ABG), the joint promoters of Mangalore Refinery and Petrochemicals Limited (MRPL), are holding 37.38% shareholding each in MRPL.

(c) ABG has expressed its intention to exit from MRPL. The purchase of ABG stake in MRPL by HPCL has not been concluded so far.

**Exploration of oil in Tamil Nadu**

3011. SHRI KA. RA. SUBBIAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of excavation of wells for petroleum and natural gas in Tamil Nadu has taken place for the last five years;

(b) if so, the details thereof district-wise; and

(c) if not, whether Government would consider exploring Tamil Nadu coast for petroleum and natural gas?